

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1333

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Judiciary, March 20, 2003

Title: An act relating to the membership of the commission on judicial conduct.

Brief Description: Changing the membership of the commission on judicial conduct.

Sponsors: Representatives Lantz, Carrell, Campbell, Darneille, O'Brien and Chase.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Judiciary: 3/20/03 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McCaslin, Chair; Esser, Vice Chair; Brandland, Hargrove, Haugen and Kline.

Staff: Jinnah Rose-McFadden (786-7421)

Background: The Commission on Judicial Conduct is a body authorized to investigate complaints filed against state judges and justices, as well as hold hearings and impose disciplinary action where warranted.

The commission is composed of 11 members, three of whom are state judges. Currently, one judge is selected by and from each of the following courts: the Court of Appeals, the superior court, and the district court. Municipal court judges are not authorized to sit on the commission.

Summary of Bill: The composition of the Commission on Judicial Conduct is amended to allow one member to be selected by and from the limited jurisdiction court judges, rather than the district court judges. This allows municipal court judges to sit on the commission.

If a proposed amendment to Article IV, Section 31 of the State Constitution, creating the Commission on Judicial Conduct, is approved and ratified by the Washington voters at the next general election, this act takes effect on January 1, 2004.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: January 1, 2004, if the proposed amendment to Article IV, Section 31 of the state Constitution is approved and ratified by the voters at the next general election.

Testimony For: This bill addresses a matter of simple equity and fairness. Municipal judges are under the purview of the commission and should have representation on it.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Representative Lantz, prime sponsor; Melanie Stewart, Municipal & District Court Judges Association.